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ABSTRACT

A booklet is presented for parents of blind children. This booklet lists various toys that are useful for the child in his development and cognitive growth. Three kits of toys are presented. Each of these kits was developed for children of approximate age groups. Kit #1 is for the very young blind infants and contains toys that usually interest youngsters who are six months to one year of age, toys that are large, soft, and lightweight. Kit #2 contains items which encourage the development of skills ordinarily acquired by children between the ages of one and two years. Kit #3 is for the blind child from two to three years of age. (CK)

Toys for Early Development of the Young

A Guide for Parents

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION
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The Office of the
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A Guide for Parents

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Toys for Early Development of the Young Blind Child

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Special Education Instructional Materials Center
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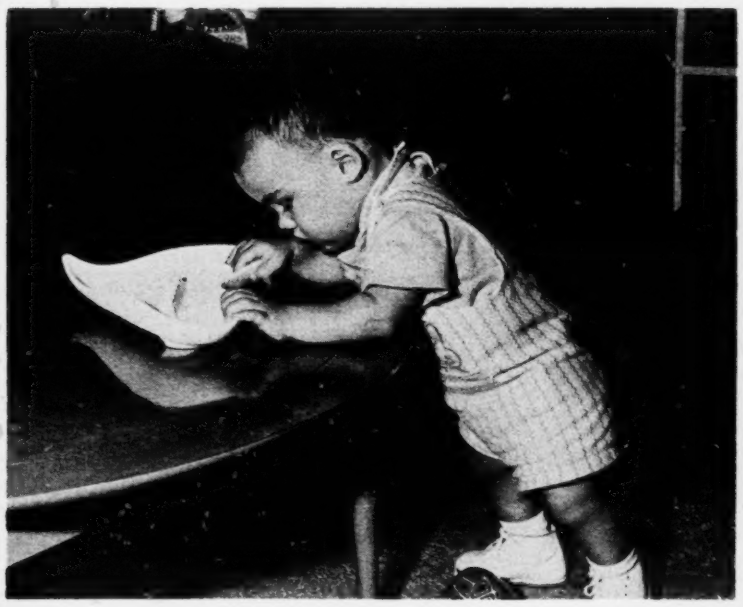
Blind Children...



Learn By Touching

Foreword

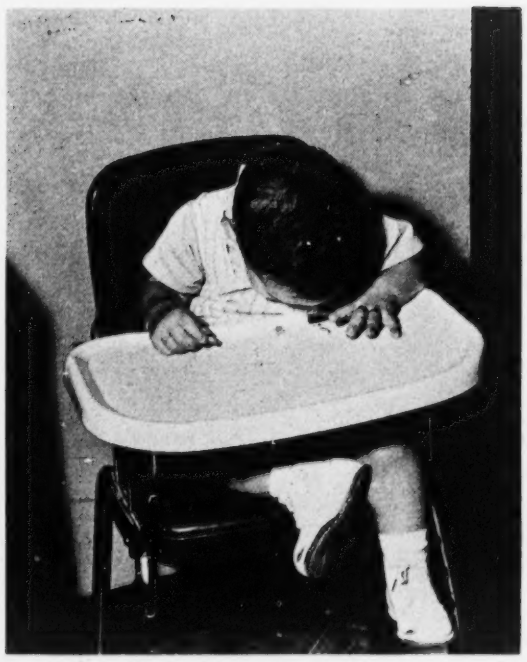
The education of **all** children, not excluding the handicapped, has long been a part of the philosophy of the public school programs in Illinois. We take pride in the fact that a systematic plan for the establishment of State-approved financially reimbursable classes was created in the early 1940's.

As a result, Illinois chose to use Federal funds made available for the education of the handicapped through Title VI, ESEA, to establish supplementary special education programs not already mandated by law. The Statewide plan implemented in 1968 focused on the screening and identification of young children affected by vision, hearing or multiple handicaps.

A mutual concern, the training of very young severely visually handicapped children preparatory to a more formal educational program, naturally led to the unified efforts of the Instructional Materials Center for Visually Handicapped and the Title VI, ESEA, program in Springfield, Illinois. These efforts were strengthened and expanded by the assistance and talents of others interested in young children.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction presents this developmental program as another phase in the total educational program provided for handicapped children in Illinois.

Sisters can be helpful . . .



but children can also learn to help themselves.

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Toys should be fun.

Preface

The Instructional Materials Center for Visually Handicapped in cooperation with Title VI, ESEA, in Springfield, Illinois, has prepared three kits for parents to use with young blind children. Each of these kits has been developed for children of approximate age groups, supplying information and materials for that particular group. The types of toys in each kit have been selected to help the child in his early development.

Some items referred to in the lists have not been included and should be furnished by the family. The items which are included are meant to serve as a guide and are not intended to limit the materials parents may wish to use with their children.

More comprehensive publications entitled "Guide for Parents of Preschool Visually Handicapped Children" and "The Visually Impaired Child; Growth, Learning, Development, Infancy to School Age" are also included as references.

Although the items included in the kits were selected because they tend to encourage the development of certain skills, ultimate success will depend on the child's own physical capabilities and on the amount of time and encouragement you give him. At this point you, the reader, become a vital part of the total program. Its success depends on you.

Introduction

Remember that your blind child is first your baby, needing your tenderness and love, and then that he is a baby who is blind, needing a little more than a child who can see. He cannot see the smile on your face nor the love in your eyes as you pass his crib; therefore, you must show it in your voice by singing to him, talking to him and handling him perhaps more than you might if he could see. Do not be afraid to cuddle him and encourage your friends, relatives and neighbors to do so, too.

The way you accept your blind child is the way he will be accepted by the people around you. Do not talk about the things he cannot do, but about the things he can do now and will be able to do in the future.

When you think he is ready to crawl, teach him to do it. Some blind children are a bit fearful at first, so be sure he will not bump into anything. As he gets older, he will be able to watch out for himself.

When you give him anything new, do not forget that he cannot see it and may be afraid of it. Help him to explore. Talk to him all the while even though he may not fully understand what you are saying, for this will give you practice in explaining things as your child grows older. As you dress him, describe the clothing and mention the color of each item. This also applies to toys and other things with which he might come in contact.

Although he cannot see color, he must know the names of colors and which colors complement each other. You know how important color is in the sighted world. Since you want your blind child to be as much a part of that world as possible, it is necessary that he at least know the names of colors and what colors go together.

When your child is ready to walk, do not be afraid to help him do it. If he has brothers or sisters, they, too, can help. Teach them to accept the blind child as one of them and to play with him as much as possible. However, make them understand that sometimes they will have to help him do some things that seem very simple to them. You will be surprised to find how quickly sighted children will accept your blind child when they understand, and they will vie with each other to do things with and for him. If you have no other children, encourage your neighbor's children to come and play with him, even if at first you might have to invite them for candy or cookies.

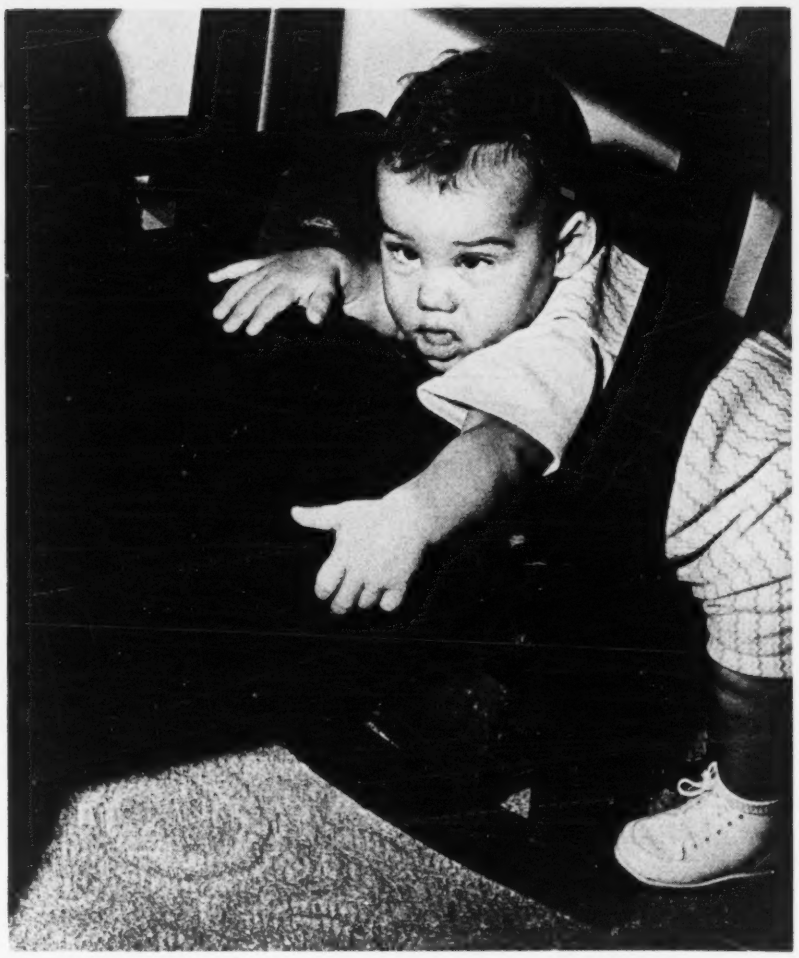
Your blind child needs many experiences, since what the sighted child learns by seeing, your child must learn by hearing or touching. Buy him toys that you are sure he can manage and enjoy, but don't deprive him of the experience of playing with kitchen pots, pans, spoons, etc., which many little tots frequently enjoy more than the most expensive toys. Let him learn to identify the various things around the house.

Your blind child is a challenge. He will depend on you for many things which will help him grow up to be a respected independent citizen in our sighted world.

The suggestions are not meant to be all-inclusive. The list of sample toys is by no means complete and it is not our intention to advertise manufacturers' products. The toys merely give examples of the activities which would assist your visually handicapped child to grow and develop in preparation for becoming a self-sufficient preschooler.

Let your child know of the tenderness and love you feel for him.

Your blind child is a challenge. He will depend on you for many things which will help him grow up to be a respected independent citizen in our sighted world.



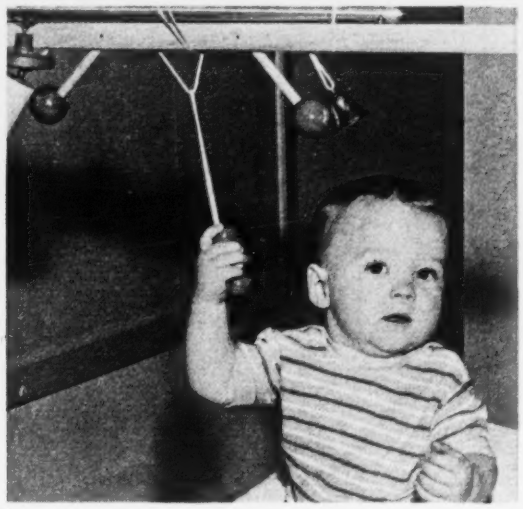
Kit #1 — Contents

This kit has been developed for the very young blind infant and contains toys that usually interest youngsters who are six months to one year of age. Under ordinary circumstances, a child should have developed specific skills by this time; however, since all children develop at different rates and because your child has a handicap, he may need special help. During this early period of a child's life, he usually becomes aware of himself, his family and his surroundings. From birth he has been a stirring little human being. Allow and help him to move about freely. Encourage him to investigate with his hands. Stimulate his curiosity.

During this first year of life, he should learn to hold up his head, roll, sit, crawl and he may even learn to stand. He may be able to learn to drink from a cup and eat with a spoon. He may learn to differentiate and pinpoint various sounds around home. His experience in tasting, smelling, hearing and touching will help him absorb and understand his environment. However, he will need your help in learning to use his hands and legs and in moving around. He will also need your help in learning how to find and play with his toys.

This kit contains toys that are large, soft and lightweight.

His experience in hearing and touching will help him understand his environment.



Toys that make noise are fun.

Stimulate his curiosity and encourage him to investigate with his hands.

TYPE	PURPOSE	SAMPLE TOY	MANUFACTURER
Rattles	To hold, shake and hear	Slap-Jack	Marlin
		Bell Blocks Baby Rattle	Creative Playthings Star Manufacturing Co.
Squeeze toys with sound	To grasp, let go and feel	Clutch Ball	Creative Playthings
Musical toys	To listen to pleasing sounds	Crib Cradle Music Box	Three Worlds Enterprises
Mobiles with sound	To touch or kick accidentally	Activator Infant Chime Mobile	Creative Playthings Creative Playthings
Cuddly toys	To hug, pat, feel, and cuddle	Kruse Bear	Creative Playthings
Bath toys	To enjoy as surprise pop-ups	Baby Shapes	Creative Playthings
Textured toys	To identify by various feelings	Music Ball	Constructive Plaything
Roly-poly toys	To enjoy a toy that "does something"	Roly-Poly Chime Ball	Fisher Price
Stacking toys	To develop coordination and discrimination	Color Stacking Discs	Playskool
Crawling toys	To move about the room	Crawligators	Creative Playthings
Wagons*	To enjoy riding around in space		
Rocking Horse*	To sense changes in direction and to experience balance		

* Sample toys not included in kits.

Kit #2 — Contents

This kit contains items which encourage the development of skills ordinarily acquired by children between the ages of one and two years. This is the age of practice and play. Although the child may still be perfecting his patterns of movement, he may now begin to stand, walk and talk. He can also exercise his powers of hearing, touching and manipulating. He may learn to throw a ball, build a tower of blocks, eat with a spoon, push and pull his toys, poke his fingers into holes, creep up steps and crawl down backwards, extend his reach by climbing onto furniture and imitate those around him. He may jabber to you, himself and his toys and use gestures in helping him communicate. He may understand you and be able to take a simple direction. At this age, some children particularly like music and may respond to it. By eighteen months he may have made great gains in his ability to handle himself and to be able to name some of the parts of the body. His curiosity tends to keep him on the go. He continually learns by reacting to all his experiences. Remember he will enjoy self-absorbed play and should be encouraged to move about freely. Help him in his excursions, but allow some time for him to play alone.

Pots and pans are frequently as much fun as expensive toys.

TYPE	PURPOSE	SAMPLE TOY	MANUFACTURER
Blocks*	To hold, stack and throw		
Balls	To roll or throw	Clutch Ball	Creative Playthings
		Textured Ball	Creative Playthings
Push or pull	To push or pull	Wagon Wheeler	Creative Playthings
		Snoopy Sniffer	Fisher Price
		Housecleaning Set	Amsco
		See and Say Series The Farmer Says	Mattel
		See and Say Series Sing Along	Mattel
		PopCorn Popper	Fisher Price
Riding toy	To locomote and push	Crawligator	Creative Playthings
Trucks, cars*	To straddle and push		
Wagons, wheelbarrows	To ride, push, carry things	Tyke Bike	Playskool
Doll buggies*	To push and take dolls for a ride		
Climbing apparatus*	To provide big muscle activity		
Swings*	To sense moving in rhythm in space		
Rocking horse*	To sense change of direction in space		
Sandbox toys*	To fill, empty and manipulate		
Bathtub toys*	To feel toys move in water		
Modeling clay	To roll, poke and pound	Play Doh	Rainbow
Take apart-fit-together*	To manipulate and practice		
Pounding toys	To pound and bang	Thumper Drum	Creative Playthings
		Change-a-Tune Piano	Fisher Price
Dolls	To hug, pat, cuddle and love	Large Bear	Jerry Elsner Co.
		Raggedy Ann	Knickerbocker
Books*	To turn pages		
Manipulative toys	To develop fine motor coordination	Pop-Up-Chime Phone	Fisher Price
		Music Box Pocket Radio	Fisher Price
		Jack-In-The-Music-Box	Mattel
		Chime Top	Ohio Art Co.
		Playskool Bell	Playskool

* Sample toys not included in kits.

This youngster enjoys walking on the balance bar.

Walking down steps can be taught.

Kit #3 — Contents

This kit has been developed for the young blind child from two to three years of age. During this period, a child's play may take on symbolism and imagination. He may like to play by himself and follow his own devices. Confidence in himself should be developing along with creative ability. At this age, children are usually very motor-minded and enjoy toys that provide an opportunity for general motor activity. He may want to walk up steps (two feet on each), and enjoy rough and tumble play as he claps his hands in glee, screeches and laughs. He frequently enjoys cardboard boxes, getting in and out of them and climbing on them. He usually likes toys he can push and pull. He should be encouraged to hold his own glass and begin to help with his own dressing. His personal identity is emerging and he should be able to say his own name. Some children speak in three-to-four word sentences and repeat what they hear compulsively. Negative judgments such as "A fork is not a spoon" are common. At this stage, simple sound patterns and Mother Goose rhymes are usually found to be enjoyable. Ordinarily bladder control should be fair. Toys enjoyed at eighteen months continued to be appreciated.

TYPE	PURPOSE	SAMPLE TOY	MANUFACTURER
Pounding toys	To bang and manipulate	Veri-Peg Pounder	Creative Playthings
		Clown Punching Bag	Creative Playthings
Large blocks and boxes*	To push, pull, crawl in and out and climb upon		
Simple swings, slides, tumbling mats*	To provide for general motor activity and rough and tumble play		
Wagons, wheel toys	To move around in space	Crawligator	Creative Playthings
Trains, trucks, cranes*	To provide for identification and imaginative play		
Blocks	To provide for simple muscle coordination	Duffell Bag of Colored Blocks	Playskool
Peg toys, gadgets	To provide for manipulation, size and form perception	Shape Sorting Box Junior Lock Box Play Chips	Creative Playthings Creative Playthings Playskool
Modeling clay, sand	To poke, pound, roll, feel	Play Doh	Rainbow
Finger paint, scribbling mats, chalkboards*	To feel, scribble		
Dolls, accessories	To love, cuddle, identify and play house	Raggedy Andy	Knickerbocker
Telephones, records	To encourage language development	Pop-Up-Chime Phone	Fisher Price
Musical instruments	To encourage sound discrimination	Music Box Pocket Radio	Fisher Price
		See and Say Series The Farmer Says	Mattel
		See and Say Series Sing Along	Mattel
Kits, cash registers*	To encourage dramatic play		
Beads	To encourage fine motor coordination	Jumbo Beads	Playskool
Problem solving, form discrimination	To encourage sequential learning	Kittie in the Kegs Geometric Form Board	Child Guidance Inc. Tactile Aids for the Blind
Wind chimes	To sense direction	Wind Chimes	

* Sample toys not included in kits.

Play

Play is an important part of a child's life. A child's play is really his work, and his toys are his tools. Toys should be fun. We can, however, help him by making certain entertaining toys available from which he can also learn. Pushing, pulling, grasping and releasing are all movements which he will later transfer into such activities as holding a spoon, grasping a cup and buttoning his coat.

Play with your child and enjoy fun with him. Encourage him, help him, but do not make drudgery out of play time. The ability to do things for himself will evolve naturally as his toys are enjoyed and used. Keep remembering that school learning is prepared for long in advance of going to first grade. The kits contain items and ideas which will assist in this preparation. You will note that each of the three kits is designed to encourage the step-by-step progression in your child's early development.

A child's play is really his work . . .

and his toys are his tools.